

The Corps and USAID: Interagency Cooperation for Tomorrow

by

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The Corps and USAID: Interagency Cooperation for Tomorrow

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Abstract

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The Corps and USAID: Interagency Cooperation for Tomorrow

Successful engagement will depend upon the effective use and integration of different elements of American power. Our diplomacy and development capabilities must help prevent conflict, spur economic growth, strengthen weak and failing states, lift people out of poverty, combat climate change and epidemic disease, and strengthen institutions of democratic governance.

—President Barack Obama
2010 National Security Strategy¹

The Interagency Community

After eleven years of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan the United States Government (USG) is considering new ways to meet national goals by increasing the United States' focus on diplomacy. President Obama's National Security Strategy of 2010, focuses on the theme of "Building at Home, Shaping Abroad." While the "Building at Home" aspect speaks to domestic policy, "Shaping Abroad" is defined with terms such as "engagement," "international institutions," "partnership," and "shared ideals and values."² In short, the President signaled his intent to transition from a leading role of military might to project US power to using the entire range of instruments of national power.

In realizing this shift, the Department of State prepared its first Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) that outlines an imperative to reduce discretionary spending; a factor that could affect many government agencies' budgets. Increased requirements, with little to no increase in funding can stimulate the search for internal and external efficiencies as well as an agency's desire to provide responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. So the question becomes: can interagency cooperation provide the efficiencies that allows government to complete inherent functions in a way that improves capacity, capabilities, and mission accomplishment? And, while providing

increased capabilities, can interagency cooperation ultimately result in the internal and external efficiencies that make such a collaboration fiscally feasible?

Expanded interagency cooperation is often proposed as a way to increase government efficiency. Presidential Policy Directives, cabinet secretaries and Congressional testimony have all addressed the need for better interagency cooperation in foreign and domestic operations. Most recently the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been a laboratory of interagency cooperation in which ad hoc models, ill-defined policy, and new doctrine sought to fix interagency problems that have existed at least since the reorganization and realignment of the National Security Act of 1947. In today's environment, interagency cooperation is considered and touted as important in almost every effort that the USG undertakes.

While interagency cooperation has been built on the benefits and positive experiences of working together, significant changes in structure and operations are based in painful lessons, some of which were failures. As an example, both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are congressionally mandated to stand-up, provide an operating framework and delineate responsibility and effort after the serious failures of interagency cooperation following Hurricane Andrew (1995) and 9/11 (2001). Abroad, the USG has experienced comparable failures at the interagency level in which the implementation of policy and strategy coupled with program execution were disjointed. Recent examples of failures are found in both Iraq and Afghanistan. During the first half of fiscal year (FY) 2012, the United States spent \$51.4 billion in Iraq reconstruction funds and \$89.4 billion in Afghanistan reconstruction.³ Reports by the Special Inspector General for Iraq

Reconstruction (SIGIR), the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) all emphasize the need for better coordination and synchronized efforts by the Department of Defense (DoD), Department of State (DoS) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the planning and execution of stabilization and reconstruction operations (SROs).

Thesis

In an era of straitened budgets, the federal government can achieve greater efficiencies through promoting and facilitating expanded partnering across the joint, interagency, intergovernmental and multinational (JIIM) community. The Department of Defense's U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Agency for International Development teamed in Iraq and Afghanistan to realize stability and reconstruction objectives. This working relationship can be expanded into other regions of the world to further diplomacy and development in order to advance United States' national security goals.

History of Collaboration

USACE and USAID have a long history of collaboration. Prior to the inception of USAID in 1961, USACE executed major foreign reconstruction and infrastructure projects such as in support of the 1947 Marshall Plan. Seeking to rebuild devastated European economies, USACE's mission was expanded to provide foreign assistance to countries such as Greece and Turkey that were vital strategic interests to the US and part of the Marshall Plan. Establishing the first-ever engineer district in Greece to direct massive foreign civil works projects, USACE began its role abroad as a foreign aid implementer. Established in 1947, the Grecian District executed large infrastructure

projects that simultaneously trained Greek professionals and provided the necessary technical know-how to the government so that it could operate and maintain them. Operating under the authorities of the European Recovery Act of 1947, USACE's construction expertise, diverse capabilities and capacity were leveraged by the USG to stabilize a post-war Europe through an economic development strategy.⁴

Successes in Europe brought more opportunities to USACE as Congress passed the Mutual Security Act in 1951. This authority allowed USACE to expand its role throughout the world as a means to bolster national security and foreign aid through implementation of construction projects and engineering services to nations who actively sought foreign military sales (FMS) and capacity building with the US. Ten years later in 1961, the Congress passed the Foreign Assistance Act, which provided the authorities to establish USAID as an independent agency that would "promote long-term assistance for economic and social development."⁵ Tied to this act are the authorities that allowed USACE to first partner with USAID and provide engineering services on a reimbursable basis; meaning that any work that USACE accomplished for USAID was directly compensated from USAID's operating account to USACE's.⁶

The Kennedy and Johnson administrations' "Decade of Development" helped promote an immediate and substantial USACE/USAID partnership as USAID's new role increased to take on projects targeted to improve a recipient nation's economy. Under the authority and direction of USAID, USACE was involved in program development, procurement and contract administration because USAID lacked the initial in-house capacity in these areas.

However, a few key developments occurred in each agency that led them to drift apart. First, USAID's development strategy starting in the 1970s shifted foreign aid focus from major technical and capital projects to "basic human needs" that "stressed a focus on food and nutrition; population planning; and health, education and human resources development."⁷ USAID's programmatic shift from USACE-type projects coupled with a 1980s orientation to leverage private engineering and architectural firms, reduced the USACE/USAID partnership to almost zero. USACE, shares in the responsibility for this as well because USACE allowed itself to drift away from USAID as it continued to pursue large construction projects. Authorized to provide engineering services to U.S.-allied nations that could pay rather than receive U.S. foreign aid, USACE shifted its efforts to the Middle East where billions of dollars of military infrastructure construction were executed during the 1960s and 70s. More than 30 years would pass before USAID and USACE would again collaborate — this time in the dangerous and unstable countries of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Forgotten Lessons

The collaboration of USAID and USACE during the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts was not a new arrangement — just something that neither was forced to do by their cabinet level leaders. Much like USAID and USACE, the USG underwent a similar relearning process to ensure that national strategic objectives are accomplished through collaborative and synchronized efforts. Integration of diplomacy, development and defense (3D) undertaken to thwart the spread of Communism after World War II soon morphed into a Cold War containment strategy. Over time, interagency collaboration and partnering declined as agencies sought to build their own capabilities rather than collaborate with others. The lessons learned and the resources devoted to 3D

collaborative type of endeavors were seldom applied during the 40 years of Cold War conflict. In today's operating environment, both perceived enemy and threats are much different than during the Cold War and provide an opportunity and imperative for 3D cooperation.

The end of the bipolar world, resulted in a different problem set of foreign policy issues — humanitarian crises and ethnic conflicts — that dominated foreign policy concerns during the 1990s. U.S. military deployments to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo and other crisis areas outpaced the readiness of multinational partners prepared to support as well as the willingness of the American public and Congress to fund them. Neither the Clinton administration nor Congress wanted to expend the resources or political capital to engage in protracted conflicts that endangered U.S. service members or required significant monetary resources.⁸

Nevertheless, interventions in Somalia and Haiti demonstrated to the Clinton administration that better interagency collaboration was crucial to foreign policy efforts that sought political stability in a country. A National Defense University review of policy and a lessons learned assessment from the 1995 Haiti operation offered five interagency recommendations: producing an interagency planning doctrine for complex emergencies; planning that compensates for organizational and operational differences between civilian and military organizations; agreeing on interagency command-and-control arrangements; agreeing on operational concepts for operations other than war; and organizing interagency war games to work out interagency differences and expose agencies to each other.⁹

Presidential Policy Directive (PPD)-56, *Managing Complex Contingency Operations* (1997), sought to institutionalize lessons learned from such experiences. PDD-56 set out basic doctrine for complex contingency operations, established an interagency structure, mandated procedures for planning and facilitated unity of effort by the Deputies Committee to act in such operations. Mechanisms to achieve unity of effort included:

- Identify appropriate missions and tasks for government agencies in the USG response.
- Develop strategies for early resolution of crises, thereby minimizing the loss of life and establishing the basis for reconciliation and reconstruction.
- Accelerate planning and implementation of civilian aspects of the operation, and intensify early action on critical funding and personnel requirements.
- Integrate all components of a U.S. response (e.g., civilian, military) at the policy level and facilitate the creation of coordination mechanisms at the operational level.
- Rapidly identify issues for senior policymakers and ensure the expeditious implementation of decisions.¹⁰

Implementation of PPD-56 significantly improved interagency planning for the 1998 Kosovo intervention. This resulted in a unified strategy and operational plans that contained detailed interagency cooperation. Executed iteratively, plans proved flexible and adaptive to changing U.S. policies and conditions on the ground. Both DoD and State Department planning defined assumptions and identified the costs of conflict

intervention which in turn allowed for better policy development and better-informed decisions by senior government officials. Unfortunately, many of these lessons were not institutionalized in doctrine or law and were ignored by President Bush's senior cabinet members and policy makers.

As a presidential candidate, George W. Bush expressed opposition to significant U.S. involvement in nation-building. During a presidential debate candidate Bush stated, "Maybe I'm missing something here I mean, are we going to have some kind of nation-building corps from America? Absolutely not."¹¹ Two large--scale interventions during the Bush administration, however, prompted him to reconsider his opposition. Because he did not produce and implement a National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) that resembled the Clinton administration PPD-56, civil and military planners fell back to stove-pipe planning that was criticized in several GAO and SIGIR reports that describe mismanagement and lack of unity of effort.

The lack of an integrated civil-military and interagency plan for stability and reconstruction operations left the military in Iraq with primary responsibility for many missions for which it was not prepared. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) although civilian, fell under the authority of DoD and Combined Joint Task Force 7, the U.S. military command in Iraq, were unable to establish a satisfactory working relationship as day-to-day unified civilian-military decision-making did not exist in Iraq. This arrangement was described as a "jerry-rigged command structure, in which there was no single American official, civilian or military, on the ground in Iraq in charge of the overall American effort."¹² The lack of integrated planning, command and control and execution led to an uncoordinated mix of stability operations.

The SIGIR identified SROs as a casualty of the lack of unity of command and effort, stating that among the extensive list of lessons learned, “the United States lack of an integrated approach for executing and planning SROs” was a “systemic weakness” which ultimately resulted in failed projects that “lacked sufficient coordination and oversight.”¹³

USACE too, learned many valuable lessons that were brought to light in SIGIR lessons learned reports. One of the first was that ad hoc organizations created in theater consume significant resources and time.¹⁴ In May, 2004, National Security Presidential Directive 36 directed that the State Department stand up the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) and that DoD do the same with the Project Contract Office (PCO).¹⁵ At the same time, DoD transitioned its former Project Management Office (PMO) under CPA authority to the PCO which months later was allowed to merge in December of 2005 with USACE’s Gulf Region Division (GRD)¹⁶ The DoS’s organization, IRMO, leveraged USAID to plan, program and execute its part of the Iraq Reconstruction Fund responsibilities. The implementation of NSPD-36 therefore laid the groundwork for USACE and USAID to work with another and execute the billions of reconstruction funds. With no experience working together and unfamiliar with each other’s procedures and systems, GRD and IRMO (USAID) encountered a steep learning curve which at times focused more on process than the execution of reconstruction. If USAID and USACE had a working relationship prior to Iraq, both agencies might have integrated systems, procedures and personnel in a manner that improved responsiveness to better manage and execute SROs.

Current Opportunities

To address the lack of agency integration, DoD and DoS together produced a “3D Planning Guide” in 2009. This pre-decisional working draft offers “to help planners understand the purpose of each agency’s plans, the processes that generate them, and, most importantly, to help identify opportunities for coordination among the three [foreign affairs implementing agencies].”¹⁷ By building understanding of how different agencies operate, planners could synchronize plans that improve collaboration, coordination and unity of effort needed to maintain or further US strategic interests. Different agency authorities combined with the operational importance of creating a coordinating document for planners have kept this planning guidance as pre-decisional. The document encourages agencies to coordinate and plan in order to facilitate interagency coordination, but they are not mandated to do so by Executive Order or law.

In 2010, the Obama administration’s NSS reiterated the importance of diplomacy in conducting national security strategy:

To succeed, we must balance and integrate all elements of American power and update our national security capacity for the 21st century. We must maintain our military’s conventional superiority, while enhancing its capacity to defeat asymmetric threats. Our diplomacy and development capabilities must be modernized, and our civilian expeditionary capacity strengthened, to support the full breadth of our priorities.¹⁸

Emphasizing a need to “modernize” diplomacy and development, the NSS adds that, “We must invest in diplomacy and development capabilities and institutions in a way that complements and reinforces our global partners.”¹⁹ To accomplish this, the NSS describes a “Whole of Government” approach in which, “[W]e are improving the integration of skills and capabilities within our military and civilian institutions, so they complement each other and operate seamlessly.”²⁰

Opportunities to expand interagency cooperation in the Obama administration are ripe. While the 3D Planning Guide was a first step, as long as it remains a draft document it carries far less significance than an officially issued document. Actual interagency cooperation that leverages existing capabilities and expertise therefore should be considered. In the case examined here, USACE and USAID have the potential and opportunity to expand collaboration and unity of effort that furthers U.S. strategic interests. In subsequent sections USACE engineering, specifically in collaboration with USAID, are examined to see how this capability could promote U.S. national development objectives.

USACE Capabilities and Funding

Based on its current authorities, structure and resources, USACE has capabilities that could complement and extend the capabilities of USAID. USACE is a Department of the Army organization delivering engineering services in the U.S. and more than 90 countries. USACE's mission is to "Provide vital public engineering services in peace and war to strengthen our Nation's security, energize the economy, and reduce risks from disasters."²¹ This mission, which has potential to pair with USAID's development efforts, is executed through two separate USACE programs: the Civil Works Program and the Military Program. While the Civil Works Program is generally domestically focused in the U.S., the Military Program operates its Interagency and International Service (IIS) Program which, as its name implies, deals directly with USAID along with other agencies.

The IIS provides technical assistance to non-Department of Defense (DoD) federal agencies, state and local governments, native American tribal nations, private U.S. firms, international organizations, and foreign governments.²² Executing a \$3.8

billion program in engineering services in 2011, IIS has the technical capability and capacity to support U.S. diplomacy and development missions. See Table 1 for the breakout of interagency program amounts for 2011.

Table 1. USACE Support for Other Programs - FY11 Expenditures

Federal Departments and Agencies	\$Millions
Department of Homeland Security, CBP	490.8
Department of State	441.8
Department of Homeland Security, FEMA	403.5
Department of Veterans Affairs	377.4
Environmental Protection Agency	332.2
Federal Departments and Agencies	\$Millions
Department of Energy	60.6
Department of Interior	46.0
Department of Homeland Security - Other	27.9
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	25.3
Department of Agriculture	23.0
Government Corporations and Commissions*	16.8
Department of Commerce	12.9
Agency for International Development	7.6
Arlington National Cemetery	5.3
Department of Justice	5.1
National Science Foundation	4.6
Other Federal Agencies	4.5
Department of Transportation	3.2
Dept Of Health & Human Services	2.4
General Services Administration	1.9
Tennessee Valley Authority	1.2
Office of Personnel Management	1.2
Capitol Building, Architect of the Capitol	1.0
Total Federal	2,296.2
State/Local/Tribal/Private Sector	121.7
Total IIS Programs	2,417.9
DoD International Programs	\$Millions
Foreign Military Sales	435.0
Afghan Security Forces Fund	937.0
Cooperative Threat Reduction	26.0
Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness	2.0
Total DoD International	1,400.0
	\$Millions
Grand Total, SFO	\$3,817.9

* \$11.9M from Millennium Challenge Corporation²³

The USACE Military Programs provide technical engineering, construction, real estate, stability operations, and environmental management products and services for the Army, Air Force, and other USG agencies and foreign governments. Operating in

more than 90 foreign countries, the Military Program has the capacity and manpower to execute over \$20 billion of reimbursable construction management and services in support of USG agencies and international partners. Military Programs has four core missions: 1. Strategic Integration (Base Realignment and Closure); 2. Gulf Region (Persian Gulf) Integration & Security Assistance; 3. Military Construction; and 4. SROs.

To execute these missions, USACE provides project management, quality control and quality assurance for projects funded by a customer. For example, for USAID, USACE could take a development project's requirements, budget information and timeline, and then produce a design and conduct the contracting piece of requesting proposals and selecting a private contractor to execute the project. In many cases for USACE projects in other countries, host nation contractors or sub-contractors are selected to work on them. Because USACE staff includes environmental, legal, real estate, contract and engineer specialists, it could synchronize all aspects of project management to support USAID projects world-wide.

USACE Operating Structure

USACE divisions and districts are responsible for world-wide projects and each division is assigned to a Geographic Combatant Commander. USACE has the experience and capabilities to operate abroad, but is bound by its authorities to only execute work on a reimbursable basis. All work performed by executing organizations of USACE (districts and their area and field offices) is done on a reimbursable basis; meaning that districts are funded almost entirely through customer-funded project costs and not a congressional appropriation. Operating on a model closer to a business rather than a government organization, USACE district, area and field offices must recover their direct and indirect costs (for example, training, human resources, and resource

management) by charging customers for projects they perform on a reimbursable, full-cost recovery basis. Because of the nature of USACE districts — not for profit — all labor costs and other incurred expenses are accounted for in a way similar to how law firms account for and bill customers. These reimbursable expenses are termed construction supervision and administration (S&A) costs, and represent activities performed and outlays incurred that are considered government construction and contract management responsibilities.

S&A charges are what funds USACE construction management services and are set rates or are modified depending on the location and customer. Non-military customers and some special military projects are funded on a cost-reimbursable basis determined in advance by a mutually agreed upon level of effort by the customer and USACE. Because S&A charges differ from how most federal agencies operate and are funded, many agencies must be briefed on the reimbursable S&A costs that USACE must charge for work that is executed.²⁴

USAID Technical Engineering Capabilities

Since its inception 1961, USAID's internal technical engineering capabilities have fluctuated depending upon USAID's workload and internal agency work force decisions. At a point after the Vietnam War, however, reduced funding and the decision to leverage private sector technical engineering capabilities severely diminished USAID's technical engineering work force and capabilities. When called upon to execute billions of dollars of reconstruction and development projects in Iraq and Afghanistan, USAID was unable to meet the enormous requirements and turned to private firms and USACE for assistance. This section considers the technical engineering organization,

capabilities and gaps in USAID and whether USACE could provide engineering capabilities to fill and complement USAID's gaps and limits.

U.S. foreign assistance aims to further America's interests while improving lives in the developing world. USAID is the principal U.S. agency that provides assistance to developing nations and countries recovering from disaster, struggling to escape poverty, and engaging in democratic reforms. USAID's authorities are centered around U.S. foreign policy objectives which support: economic growth; agriculture and trade; global health; and democracy, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance. Spending less than one percent of the total federal budget, USAID is active in over 100 countries to accomplish U.S. development objectives.²⁵

USAID's technical engineering capability lies in its Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and Environment's Office of Infrastructure and Engineering (E3/E&I). E3/E&I has three programs: Energy, Engineering and Urban, Information and Communications Technology. These programs oversee and provide technical assistance for USAID's engineering efforts. With a staff of 24 employees and an annual operating budget of \$17 million, most aspects of project management are contracted to private for-profit architectural and engineering firms. Leveraging USACE's capability and expanding its role in USAID development projects could reduce the risk to quality control issues and budget overruns that have occurred.²⁶

Current USACE Support to USAID

USACE support to USAID outside of those reconstruction and development projects under way in Afghanistan and Iraq is relatively small. In 2010, USACE executed approximately \$13 million in services to USAID and another \$7.6 million the following year. USACE has the capacity to execute more for USAID if called upon.

Other agencies have already sought to capitalize on USACE's engineering services including the State Department which in 2011 used \$442 million in USACE services and was second largest interagency customer of USACE behind the Department of Homeland Defense's Customs and Border Protection. These services primarily included project management and technical support to DoS's bureaus around the world as well as providing technical water resources support for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environment and Science. The large program and working relationship developed in Iraq and Afghanistan could therefore transfer to other areas where USAID needs engineering services. Further development of this relationship meets the intent of interagency cooperation and sets an example for future whole of government approaches to complex problems.

Opportunities to Partner — Leveraging Capabilities

The Budget Control Act of 2011 signaled to DoD that budget cutbacks were on the way. Faced with tough decisions in manning, equipping and training, the Army and the other services will need to reprioritize how they will support their mission sets that have increased since 2001. In some aspects, services may need to reassess the types of missions they retain in their mission sets and leverage others to assist with remaining capabilities gaps. While much of this discussion has centered on the benefit for USAID partnering with USACE, DoD should weigh the benefit it could garner by shifting and funding reconstruction and general engineering SRO responsibilities to USACE.

DoD's focus on SROs began in Iraq and was quickly codified in 2005 with the release of DoD Directive 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSSTR) Operations." This directive, coupled with doctrinal updates in Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 and Army Field Manual 3-0, directed that stability

operations become a core mission set equal to that of offensive and defensive operations.²⁷ Executing billions of dollars in SROs in Iraq and Afghanistan, DoD recognized the importance of SROs to set conditions needed for military forces to redeploy. During the last three years, updated doctrine has emphasized building partner capacity as part of Phase 0 Operations (Shaping) to prevent future conflicts. Joint Publication (JP) 5-0, “Joint Operation Planning,” defines Phase 0 (Shaping) operations as “missions, task, and actions are those that are designed to dissuade or deter adversaries and assure friends, as well as set conditions for the contingency plan and are generally conducted through security cooperation activities.”²⁸

USACE has shown through its past operations in Iraq and current operations in Afghanistan that it has the capacity and capability to surge engineering services when needed. As deployed engineering capability decreases in Afghanistan with the drawdown of U.S. forces, opportunities exist to support USAID’s development missions abroad. As mentioned, USAID does not use full-spectrum engineer services as many other federal agencies do. Currently, the sole working agreement between USACE and USAID is a Participating Agency Service Agreement (PASA), which focuses on a myriad of water sector activities (water supply, sanitation and hygiene) in support of USAID development projects. PASAs are common for interagency cooperation. They are arrangements between USG agencies where the participating agency, such as USACE, performs engineering and technical services for another, in this case USAID. The USACE water sector PASA with USAID is set at \$500K per year. It is an example of the opportunity that USAID has to leverage USACE’s expertise not only in water, but the full complement of services that USACE can provide. So, the question is why not

partner beyond the confines of Iraq and Afghanistan? Why not leverage the engineer capabilities and capacity that USACE, the USG's largest public engineering organization, has in its operations and programs?

Nowhere in the literature reviewed for this paper could the reasons be discerned as to why USAID prefers to use private architecture and engineering firms. However, a recent discussion with a mid-level USAID employee indicates that one reason may center around an agency culture in USAID that USACE is thought to create a perception that the U.S. Army is executing USAID's projects — and thereby furthering efforts to militarize the USG's foreign policy. Similar sentiment appears in literature that criticizes the DoD's role in SRO in Iraq and Afghanistan where such cooperation and the latest "3D approach," are depicted as the "most explicit, iteration of the militarization of U.S. foreign policy."²⁹ Whatever the reasons that inhibit expanded USACE and USAID partnering, an opportunity exists for agencies to assist one another to improve capacity to better execute their overall governmental function.

Interagency partnering, however, is not only driven by functional necessity, it is also driven by fiscal need. With USAID leveraging USACE's engineering capabilities, USAID has the potential to save personnel dollars by using USACE personnel instead of expanding its EGAT/I&E office. Previously mentioned, USACE is a project-funded organization that sizes its work force according to its pending program requirements that each USACE district executes. Fiscally speaking, leveraging USACE's forward deployed technical engineering support could allow USAID to use USACE assets on a needs-only basis. This type of engineer support could allow USAID to focus personnel dollars elsewhere in areas that a similar capability only existed within USAID instead of

maintaining an in-house capability that is readily available elsewhere in the USG. Former Secretary of State Clinton directly emphasized leveraging of interagency capability in the QDDR where she stated, “We will seek to utilize the strengths of all USG agencies and not seek to duplicate established relationships, personnel and mechanisms, but coordinate with the most effective agencies to carry out the work.”³⁰

Recommendations

In key U. S. Government documents pertaining to whole of government approaches to foreign activities, there is a fundamental recognition that interagency cooperation should be expanded for efficiency and effectiveness purposes. Similar domestic interagency issues were studied and responded to in 1993 as a result of Hurricane Andrew and then after the 9/11 attacks. It should be noted, however, that these two significant interagency failures reflected poorly on the sitting administration and therefore created Executive Branch resolve and impetus for action. Public outrage has not demanded interagency cooperation in foreign activities as it was with the domestic failures and will not likely create a ground-swell of momentum for the Executive Branch to force change.

In light of this current environment, two classes of recommendations are offered: short-term and long-term. Short-term recommendations are those which can be achieved within one to two years and can be accomplished in the executive branch. Long-term recommendations can be achieved within three to five years and may include actions that require legislative authorization and appropriation.

Short-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Commission a USAID/USACE working group to conduct a study on present and future requirements and whether USACE could provide

engineering or technical services to USAID. The working group should evaluate why USAID and USACE have not significantly partnered outside of Iraq and Afghanistan and how both agencies may be able to use one another's expertise. Determine project thresholds for USACE partnering, and actions that would allow USACE and USAID personnel to at a minimum: train together; conduct interagency exchanges; share technology and best engineering practices; and conduct table-top exercises. Study and determine if there is an emerging USACE requirement to support USAID's increased role regarding food security "Feed the Future" by providing water sector support. Provide this report to agency leadership with recommendations and a plan to move forward.

Recommendation #2: Determine if USACE can provide low-cost or no-cost support to USAID. If so, for what type of engineering and technical services, and if not, what authorities or funding are necessary to provide this support.

Recommendation #3: Prepare a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between USACE and USAID that leverages the findings of the USAID/USACE working group mentioned in first recommendation. This MOA will set out initial requirements, expectations, funding streams, and basics for a relationship to include subsequent manning recommendations. In the MOA, the basics of technical services could include engineering, design and design review, project management, construction management, procurement, real estate, research and development (R&D) and environmental support available for USAID's use. More importantly, this MOA could signal that agency senior leaders support an increased partnership to execute global development.

Include contingency surge manning as part of the MOA due to the expeditionary nature and size of USACE. If necessary, USACE personnel could be called upon to support urgent USAID requirements. Many of the 4000 new hires that USACE brought on between 2007-2011 have 'deployability clauses' in their contracts. A recent Rand study highlighted the difference in workforces between the DoD and USAID in which the USAID (the exception is the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance) workforce was not structured to respond quickly with large deployments. Tied to a primary mission of pursuing U.S. foreign-policy interests and international development, USAID's structure had limited personnel resources to deploy to a crisis response.³¹ The study stated:

Seeking to ensure capacity for both missions simultaneously creates tension and can raise questions about the organizations' primary mission. Every dollar of funding that goes to preparing for future eventualities is a dollar that is not being used to fund current diplomacy, security-assistance, and foreign-assistance programs.³²

Recommendation #4: Manning. While USACE provides a liaison officer (LNO) to USAID's Headquarters in Washington, DC, a funded USACE position located at each of the five USAID Bureaus would better inform and integrate USACE's capability and capacity in each specific bureau. Currently, USACE funds an LNO at each of the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs). Having an LNO at each USAID Bureau would better coordinate regional effects of both a Theater Campaign Plan with development. Because GCC and USAID Bureaus are geographically different, LNOs from the GCC and USAID would coordinate actions and planning within the 3D construct. Fidelity of these inputs from the GCC's perspective would feed into the Adaptive Planning and Execution Tool and improve the GCC planning process. Funding for these positions should rest with USACE.

Long-Term Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Several studies conclude that Goldwater-Nichols-like legislation is necessary to bring more robust interagency cooperation. However, as this broad goal appears difficult if not impossible, specific legislation should be considered explicitly for USACE-USAID that will ease fiscal restrictions that hamper interagency coordination. This legislation should also seek to delineate USACE-USAID authorities and critical functions similar to those found in the National Response Framework (NRF). The NRF is a how-to guide that provides specific direction and responsibilities to all levels of government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to conduct an all-hazards response. As part of this legislation, implement a study to determine if the NRF could be expanded to create a similar framework focusing on foreign responses that might include humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and SROs.³³ Include in this study whether a new integrating agency may be necessary to “command and carry out contingency relief and reconstruction operations” as the former SIGIR, Stuart Bowen has called for.³⁴ Of course it is important that this recommendation and the recommended studies have a Congressional mandate to ensure that the interagency improvements and studies are continued in subsequent administrations.³⁵

Recommendation #2: Codify through legislation that DoD and USAID personnel experience an interagency tour prior to becoming a Flag officer or Senior Executive Service staff. In the 2010 QDDR, the prioritization of “interagency experience and talents as criteria for choosing and training Chiefs of Missions and Deputy Chiefs of Missions” was based on Secretary Clinton’s push to grow DoS personnel outside experience with other agencies.³⁶ The same should apply to USAID senior personnel.

Conclusion

Defense Strategic Guidance released in 2012 states that, “The United States faces profound challenges that require strong, agile and capable military forces whose actions are harmonized with other elements of U.S. national power.”³⁷ The partnership between USAID and USACE is an important step that will not only increase USAID’s capacity to execute its global development role but allows USACE to better inform, coordinate and integrate GCC TSC plans. Encouraging an expanded partnership between USAID and USACE further supports President Obama’s Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development (PPD-6) which states, “USAID will work in collaboration with other agencies to formulate country development cooperation strategies that are results-oriented, and will partner with host countries to focus investment in key areas that shape countries’ overall stability and prosperity.”³⁸

Today marks a time of growing development demands throughout the world. Hampered by fiscal and political uncertainty, academics, politicians and citizens alike have raised the question whether the investment in development can head off conflict. After spending almost \$2 trillion in Iraq and Afghanistan, current American leadership focuses its efforts on diplomacy and development as a means to “secure the conditions abroad that ensure American security and prosperity at home.”³⁹ All agencies must use effective and efficient practices to develop materiel and strategic solutions to solve mounting requirements that affect national security objectives. The partnering of the USAID with USACE make not only fiscal sense, but sets the paradigm for furthering 3D partnering.

Endnotes

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¹⁹ Ibid, 14.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Home Page, <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions.aspx>, (accessed January 2, 2013).

²² Ibid.

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